

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SANAA 01832 171119Z

12

ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CPR-02 IO-13 CU-04 VO-03 SCA-01

SY-10 USSS-00 FBIE-00 OIC-04 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 PA-03 PRS-01 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00

INRE-00 DRC-01 /089 W

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O 171020Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2738

USUN IMMEDIATE 032

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 1832

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJ: YEMENI OFFICIAL VISITING US

1. ACTING FONMIN ABDULLAH AL-ASNAG INFORMED ME SEPTEMBER 16 THAT DEPUTY PRIMIN/FONMIN MUHAMMAD AHMED NU'MAN HAD LEFT BEIRUT PREVIOUS DAY EN ROUTE TO US TO ATTEND UNGA OPENING. IT WAS EXPECTED THAT HE WOULD ARRIVE IN NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 17 BUT FOREIGN OFFICE NOT AWARE WHICH FLIGHT. FOREIGN OFFICE UNDERSECRETARY ALI AL-KHODR HAD ALREADY LEFT SANAA TO JOIN NU'MAN IN NEW YORK. (APPRECIATE USUN CUSTOMS/ARRIVAL COURTESIES.)

2. ASNAG SAID PRESIDENT IRYANI HAD RECEIVED MESSAGE FROM NU'MAN ASKING WHETHER PRESIDENT WOULD APPROVE HIS REMAINING IN US FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS AFTER COMPLETION OF HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES IN NEW YORK TO PERMIT HIM MAKE A TRIP AROUND US WHICH HE HAD NEVER VISITED. PRESIDENT IRYAFI HAD APPROVED.

3. ASNAG ADVISED THAT HE WOULD ALSO BE GOING TO NEW YORK FOR A WEEK OR SO, ARRIVING ON OR ABOUT SEPTEMBER 30. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION ASNAG SAID HE HAD BEEN IN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SANAA 01832 171119Z

NEW YORK BEFORE BUT NEVER OUTSIDE.

4. COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, WE HAVE HAD UNDER DISCUSSION WITH NU'MAN FOR PAST NINE MONTHS THE TIMING OF HIS ACCEPTANCE OF INVITATION TO VISIT WASHINGTON WHICH WAS EXTENDED BY FORMER SECRETARY ROGERS. INFORMALLY WE

HAD LONG AGO REVEIUED WITH DEPUTY PRIMIN/FONMIN QUESTION OF APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEK TOUR AROUND US, WHICH HE HAS NEVER SEEN, IN CONJUNCTION HIS VISIT WITH SECRETARY, WHEN AND IF THAT EVENTUATED. SINCE HE HAS BEEN OUT OF YEMEN, WE HAD HAD NO CONTACT WITH HIM ON THIS SUBJECT FOR ABOUT TWO MONTHS.

5. WE REALIZE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY GLUT OF IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES VISITING US IN CONNECTION WITH UNGA AND WOULD ASK THAT, IN NEW YORK, NU'MAN RECEIVE ONLY SAME TREATMENT AS THAT ACCORDED OTHER FOREIGN MINISTERS IN TERMS OF MEETING SECRETARY (IF SECRETARY WILL BE IN NEW YORK) OR OTHER SENIOR US OFFICIAL. ALSO, WE THINK NU'MAN COULD BE BROUGHT TO UNDERSTAND REASONS WHY IT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT FOR NEW SECRETARY TO SEE HIM IN WASHINGTON. NEVERTHELESS, IF IT CAN BE ARRANGED IN EITHER NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON WE FEEL MEETING VERY MUCH TO BE RECOMMENDED IN TERMS US-YAR RELATIONS. BECAUSE OF NU'MAN'S EFFERVESCENT INTELLIGENCE AND BALANCE (PARA 8) WE THINK MEETING WOULD ALSO BE ENJOYED BY SECRETARY.

5. WHETHER OR NOT MEETING WITH SECRETARY, PURSUANT EARLIER INVITATION, CAN BE ARRANGED, WE HOPE NU'MAN WILL BE EXTENDED APPROPRIATE COURTESIES WHEN HE VISITS WASHINGTON, WHICH HE WILL BE DOING IN ANY CASE TO CONSULT WITH AMBASSADOR GEGHMAN. ALSO REQUEST HE BE GIVEN PARTIAL LEADER GRANT TO COVER APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS' TRAVEL IN US. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT BE IN TOUCH WITH NU'MAN EITHER THROUGH AMBASSADOR GEGHMAN OR DIRECTLY IN NEW YORK, WHERE HE WILL PROBABLY STAY IN BUCHMAN TOWERS, TO WORK OUT ARRANGEMENTS.

6 ASNAG VISIT TO NEW YORK ALSO PRESENTS UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO CONSOLIDATE ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH A CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SANAA 01832 171119Z

KEY POLITICAL FIGURE OF BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH YEMEN. ON CURRENT READING, ASNAG UNLIKELY BE ABLE STAY IN US LONG ENOUGH TO DO MORE THAN VISIT WASHINGTON. WE HOPEMRHE CAN AND THAT MEETINGS AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS IN DEPARTMENT CAN BE ARRANGED. IF BY CHANCE HIS PLANS CHANGE AND HE CAN REMAIN LONGER IN US, WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT HE, TOO, FOR FOLLOWING REASONS, BE OFFERED PARTIAL GRANT.

7. ON THE CIVILIAN SIDE, FIVE PERSONALITIES (BELOW THE PRESIDENT) CURRENTLY SPARK THE YARG IN POLITICAL AND PARTICULARLY DEVELOPMENTAL TERMS: FONMIN NU'MAN, MIN OF ECONOMY ASNAG, MIN OF DEVELOPMENT SA'ID, CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT AL-AHMAR, AND CENTRAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR DR. ABDUL KARIM AL-IRYANI. ALL ARE YOUNG--35-45 AND BID FAIR TO BE AROUND FOR A LONG TIME. IN TERMS OF EXPOSING THEM TO THE US, AND RE-ENFORCING THE VERY CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE WITH EACH IN YEMEN, WE HAVE, WITH THE NU'MAN AND ASNAG VISITS, AN OPPORTUNITY ROUND OUT OUR HIGHEST PRIORITIES IN USE OF LEADER GRANTS. DR IRYANI KNOWS US WELL THROUGH SEVERAL YEARS OF EDUCATION AND LATER VISITS TO IBRD, ETC.; HE NEEDS NO GRANT. SA'ID AND AL-AHMAR BOTH RECEIVED GRANTS IN FY 73. NU'MAN AND ASNAG, IF WE CAN GET THEM, WOULD COMPLETE THE SLATE AT THIS HIGHEST LEVEL, AFTER WHICH WE INTEND TURN ATTENTION TO OTHER PRIORITIES (CHIEF OF STAFF MASWARI) AND OTHER SECOND ECHELON BUT COMING GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL FIGURES.

8. BOTH NU'MAN AND ASNAG SPEAK ENGLISH WELL. BOTH ARE ENGAGING, INTELLIGENT, MODERATE AND POSSESSED OF GOOD SENSES OF HUMOR. THEY REFLECT YEMEN'S REALISM ON ARAB/ISRAELI PROBLEM AND SHARE THE CONVICTION THAT YEMEN'S FIRST CONCERN MUST BE FOR ITS OWN MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT.
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